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May 9, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Special Group (CI) Meeting  
2 p.m., Thursday, May 9, 1963

PRESENT: Governor Harriman, Mr. Gilpatric, Mr. Bell, General Taylor,  
Mr. Forrestal, Mr. Wilson vice Mr. Murrow, Mr. Helms vice  
Mr. McCone, Mr. Nolan vice The Attorney General

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COMPLETED,  
6/26/2003

Mr. Koren, General Krulak, Mr. Colby [ ] were  
present for Item No. 1.

Mr. Wellman was present for Item No. 2.

Mr. Maechling was present for the meeting

1. Southeast Asia

a. Southeast Asia Status Report

Thailand - Mr. Koren commented that the reasons for anti-terrorist campaign in the South has not been effective to date is lack of Thai concentration on the problem and the fact that to some extent the Thai consider it a Malayan responsibility.

He pointed out that the Thai plan to redeploy military units into key remote areas is an encouraging development, as we have been pushing for this for a long time.

In response to a question by General Taylor on the status of the request for additional advisors to work with provincial police, Mr. Bell stated that AID can meet this new requirement for additional personnel.

Mr. Gilpatric reported that planning is going forward on plans to provide the Army's portable transmitter for use in Thailand. He indicated agreement that the funding for this project is to come from MAP but said that it would be necessary to adjust MAP priorities for Thailand. Mr. Bell suggested that due to possible legal problems on use of MAP funds for this project, DOD and AID representatives should meet to consider the use of AID supporting assistance.

[ ] commented on the current situation in Thailand and pointed out that Sarit is becoming aware of the insurgency problem. He stated that the repatriation program for the Vietnamese minority in the Northeast is progressing satisfactorily. [ ] explained that the principal reason for the lack of effective operations in the Thai/Malayan border is that the Thai Border Police Unit consists of newly recruited personnel. He hopes that the establishment of a Thai Special Branch Office in this area will help in bringing information on the seriousness of the situation

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to the attention of the Thai Government. He remarked that the Thai is showing increased concern at political trends in Burma.

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[ ] in responding to a question on police programs stated that the Border Police program is going well but that the Provincial Police program is just getting started. However, he believes that Thai effort on the latter seems good at this time.

Cambodia - Mr. Koren pointed out that a military attaché from Viet-Nam has arrived in Phnom Penh and it is hoped that this move will assist in easing border incidents.

Viet-Nam - Mr. Koren reported that the proposed agreement with the Vietnamese on the joint counterinsurgency fund will materially reduce U.S. control of these funds. Mr. Bell observed that AID personnel in the field are concerned over this arrangement because the Vietnamese may not push established programs with the necessary vigor.

b. Report on the Honolulu Conference

General Krulak presented a summary review of the Secretary of Defense's recent Honolulu Conference bringing out the following points: General Harkins cited indicators that identify favorable trends in the situation in Viet-Nam. Ambassador Nolting stated that the Vietnamese confidence in the U.S. is not as good as it was some months ago, but recent speeches by senior Government officials have somewhat restored lost ground.

Other items mentioned by General Krulak included: The USOM effort is now geared to counterinsurgency; revised rules for border operations should assist in actions against the Viet-Cong; border patrol operations are moving forward but will not seal off the border; planning is going forward on a contingency basis for future MAP and force structure adjustments; air interdiction is being applied under stringent rules and is achieving good results.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Colby agreed to look into recent developments in the Laos/South Viet-Nam border area.

The Group discussed the problem of reconciling differences of opinion on the situation in Viet-Nam as between officials on the scene and the U.S. press. Mr. Wilson commented that our military in Viet-Nam should take the press more into their confidence. Mr. Bell suggested that we should explore sending opinion leaders other than the press out to Viet-Nam.

The Group agreed that Mr. Bell should make a recommendation as to when it would be advisable to have General Harkins return for appearances before various Congressional committees. General Taylor indicated that he sees no problem in having General Harkins return for this purpose.

c. Man-Pack Jungle Radio

Mr. Gilpatric reported that Defense has not completely solved the problem of developing an operationally reliable man-pack jungle radio. The

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two radios showing the most promise are being tested in the field and in the Army electronics laboratories.

Mr. Gilpatric assured the Group that both Defense and the Army will continue to follow through on this matter.

2. Venezuelaa. Progress Report on Internal Defense Plan for Venezuela

Mr. Wellman discussed the current progress report pointing out actions taken on the critical points mentioned in Ambassador Stewart's transmittal memorandum. He reported that favored developments in the situation are: support by the military for Betancourt; progress in economic-social development programs; favorable development with student groups. On the negative side no agreement has been reached between the anti-communist parties on the candidate for President, and terrorist activities continue.

The Chairman requested Mr. Forrestal to look into the status of efforts to avoid a cutback of Venezuelan oil imports.

Mr. Gilpatric stated that the Defense Department is still considering a proposed cutback in procurement of off-shore petroleum products from Venezuela within the overall effort to reduce the unfavorable balance of payments. He said Defense was aware of State's position in favor of maintaining the present level of procurement.

The Group discussed the recommendation contained in the Lansdale Report to send a large group of U.S. students to work in the University of Caracas and observed that this may not be the most effective way to approach this problem. The Group agreed that an inter-departmental working group should be established to study the problem of countering Communist infiltration into student groups.

In approving the progress report the Group requested that future reports include the status of civic action programs.

Miscellaneous

A. The Group agreed with General Taylor's suggestion that CIA prepare a Special National Intelligence Estimate on "The Implications of a Possible Resumption of the Kurdish Rebellion", and report on this item at the next meeting.

B. General Taylor reported that during his recent trip to Iran that both the Shah and the U.S. Ambassador believed that the tribal conflicts in the South were not serious and resulted primarily from poor crops and the lack of prompt assistance by the Government. He pointed out the concern of the Iranians over developments in neighboring Arab countries. General Taylor also mentioned that the Ambassador still requests a mounted police advisor and five Warrant Officer advisors to be assigned to the Gendarmerie.

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James W. Dingeman )  
Executive Secretary